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MONTANA WOOD PRODUCTS FIRMS REPORT HIGH
PRODUCTION, EMPLOYMENT, WAGES

MISSOULA--

Production, employment, and wages remained at high levels for the state's wood products firms during second quarter 1984, despite depressed lumber prices, according to a University of Montana research office.

The quarterly figures on the Montana industry were released by the UM Bureau of Business and Economic Research. The information is gathered through a survey done in cooperation with the Montana Wood Products Association. The survey includes 34 plants that account for over 90 percent of the state's wood products manufacturing activity.

Lumber and plywood production dropped slightly below first-quarter figures, but bureau researchers attribute some of that decrease to plants that were temporarily closed for annual maintenance. However, several sawmills indicated they had reduced production in June due to poor market conditions. Production for the rest of 1984 likely will continue at lower levels.

Both employment and wages were slightly above first-quarter levels. An average of 4,706 production workers were on the job during second quarter 1984, compared to 4,619 for the first three months of the year. Total wages paid out to production workers during the second quarter amounted to about \$28,119,000 compared to \$27,935,000 during the first quarter. These figures refer only to production workers at mill sites and do not include the several thousand workers in logging, trucking, and other related areas.